

## The Knowledge Bank at The Ohio State University

### Ohio State Engineer

**Title:** The Engineer's Bookshelf

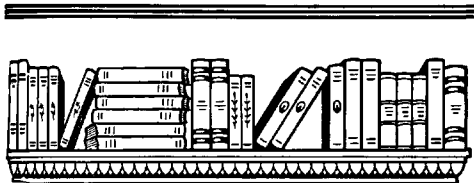
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# The Engineer's Bookshelf

WILSON R. DUMBLE  
Department of English

The appearance of any book at any time written and illustrated by James Thurber is always an event. Mr. Thurber, one of the outstandingly prominent alumni of Ohio State University, has helped to make the New Yorker magazine the fine bit of reading that it is. His many friends on the campus were delighted to see pictures of him—a full page of them—in the New York Tribune Books for January 3. With his wife, Mr. Thurber is now living at Cornwall, Conn., and after a series of operations he is slowly regaining his sight. In recent years, according to **Books**, "Thurber has been exploring radio programs and has just finished a series of pieces about them. He likes best Here's Morgan; Amos and Andy rates very high. An ardent baseball fan, he listens to broadcasts of the games."

John Murray, the author of the following review of Jim Thurber's new book, is Assistant Alumni Secretary. Very well known on the campus, Mr. Murray's most recent sally into the world of creative writing is an interesting article about Mike Peppe which is to appear in a forthcoming issue of **Esquire**.

A graduate of the College of Journalism, Mr. Murray has been identified with the Alumni office since March, 1941. When an undergraduate, he was a member of The Lantern staff, and held membership in Sigma Delta Chi and Ohio Stater.

## MY WORLD—AND WELCOME TO IT

Publisher's blurbs—those superlatived reviews on the inside flap of a book's cover, book browser's literature, so to speak—are not famous for strict accuracy of statement. However, there are exceptions, and one such exception is the blurb of "My World—And Welcome To It," (Harcourt, Brace and Company, \$2.50), Ohio State's Jim Thurber's latest book.

"James Thurber," the blurb reads, "although well on into his middle forties now, maintains as keen an interest as ever in Life, Letters, poodle dogs, colored maids, Cato the Elder, bowerbirds sex, cities, husbands and wives, wives and husbands, and the truth behind the murder of King Duncan. There has probably never been a book of humor or satire which covers as many subjects as this one does."

All the subjects the blurb mentions and more are treated by Thurber, whose failing eyesight

(his one good eye has been precariously close to going out) has not affected either the quality or the quantity of his work. Every reader should find something of interest in this fine volume by one of America's most gifted writers whether he seeks hysterically funny humor (*A Ride With Olympi*, *You Could Look It Up*, *What Do You Mean It Was Brillig*), or masterful craftsmanship in short-story writing (*The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*), or merciless psychological tales (*The Whip-Poor-Will*), or satire good (*Helpful Hints And The Hoveys*), or satire bad (*Interview With A Lemming*), or splendid factual reporting (*A Sort of Genius*), or delightful, straight-told travel tales (*La Grande Ville de Plaisir*), or the heart-touching "Memorial" to a poodle dog that rivals McIntyre's best dog tales.

Whether, as **Time** Magazine feels, this is a social-conscious Thurber rebelling against the twisted hearts and minds of men, I do not know; but regardless of those few pieces that might be so construed are bitter and unrelieved, and immature. "Interview With A Lemming" is one such. The exploring scientist is astonished to find a lemming that can talk.

"You are perhaps the most mysterious of creatures," says the scientist.

"If we are going to indulge in adjectives beginning with m'," the lemming replies, "let me apply a few to your species—murderous, maladjusted, maleficent, malicious and muffle-headed. You kill, you mangle, you torture, you imprison, you starve each other. You cut down elm trees to put up institutions for people driven insane by the cutting down of elm trees . . ."

And the story concludes with the scientist remarking that in spite of his life-long study of lemmings, he doesn't understand why all lemmings "rush down to the sea and drown yourselves."

"How curious," the lemming replies, "The one thing I don't understand is why you human beings don't."

Satire needs more charity, more humanness than that. "Memorial," though not a satire, or so I think, has the gentleness and kindness that the quoted excerpt lacks. For here is a poodle who can't quite understand the ways of humans but

(Continued on page 16)

# EGGS...ON TOAST OR

**Allis-Chalmers Equipment Helps  
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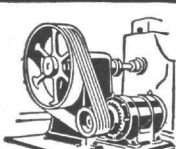
OFFERS EVERY MANUFACTURER EQUIPMENT AND ENGINEERING



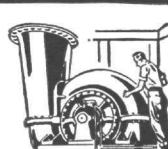
**ELECTRICAL  
EQUIPMENT**



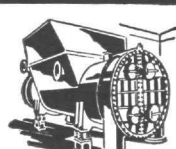
**STEAM AND  
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COMPRESSORS**



**ENGINES AND  
CONDENSERS**



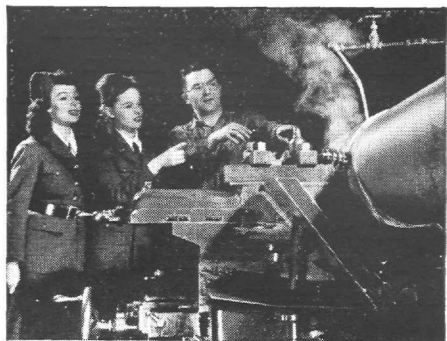
**CENTRIFUGAL  
PUMPS**

# TOKYO!

## VICTORY NEWS

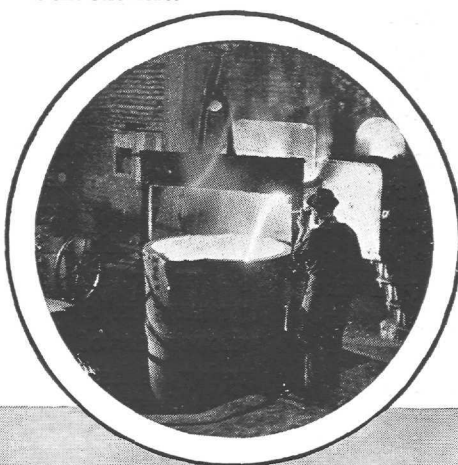
**Rosiclare, Ill.**—91 Allis-Chalmers motors constitute the major portion of a connected load of close to 1,000 hp driving the new fluorspar mill of the Mahoning Mining Company here.

The efficient layout of flexible motors and drives is largely responsible for the plant's record production of high-grade fluorspar zinc-lead ore. Throughout the mill, the Allis-Chalmers motors operate dump hoppers, flotation cells, vibrators, kilns, pumps and many other machines.

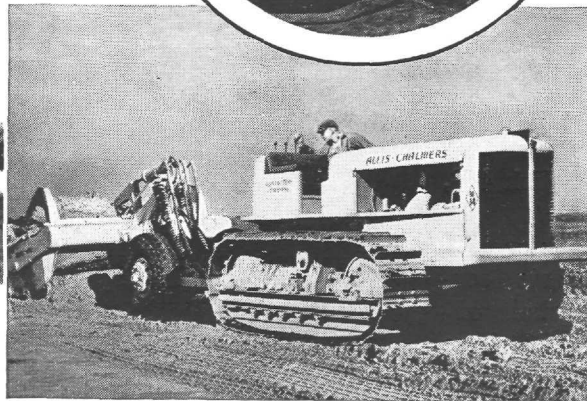


"We're Buying and Building," an A-C workman tells MGM bond rally starlets, as he machines a Navy propeller shaft.

A-C Equipment helps produce both steel and explosive charge for demolition bombs like the one here.



A-C Plants are casting and finishing industrial machinery at a record rate!



Allis-Chalmers tractors and grading equipment are helping build military roads and airports.

**Milwaukee, Wis.**—The "feed-back" system, which utilizes 85% of the enormous power expended in breaking in aircraft engines on test stands, has been adopted by Buick in its new plant in a mid-western city.

The new engines are connected by flexible shaft couplings to water-cooled magnetic couplings, which transmit power to 1200 kva synchronous generators.

Allis-Chalmers alternating current units are at work here. They not only help to crank the new engines, but they also operate as current absorption-type dynamometers—receiving power from the aircraft engine, turning it into electrical energy and feeding it back into the line. This test set-up provides a high percentage of the power required by this company's manufacturing operations.



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WE WORK FOR  
**VICTORY**

WE PLAN FOR  
**PEACE**



## ENGINEER'S BOOKSHELF

(Continued from page 13)

who says, in effect, "Forgive them. There's some good in them."

But though you may forget the lemming, you'll not forget Olympe, Walter Mitty, the midget Pearl Du Monville ("a batter that oughta be in a bottle of alcohol instead of up there at the plate in a big-league game between the teams that is fightin' for first place"), or any of a dozen other funny, droll, or whimsical characters that inhabit the pages of "My World—and Welcome To It." Thurber fans will recognize some of the stories because they have been published before in *The New Yorker* or the *Saturday Evening Post* or in the New York newspaper, *PM*.

Like most men known as humorists—and Thurber's humor wears well—this tall, sensitive-looking man is, perhaps, not appreciated sufficiently as a serious writer of straight fiction, but there's enough of the latter in this volume to convince any who did not already know it.

And for those who love Thurber's drawings—forlorn whimsy in a too stern world—the volume contains a generous selection of them.

And if the lady who sat next to Thurber one dinner doesn't tickle your funny-bone, you'd better see your favorite psychiatrist. She, a sailor, cornered Thurber, a landlubber, and said, "Do you reef in your gaff topsails when you are close-hauled or do you let go the mizzen-top-bowlines and cross-jack-braces?" Only she didn't say it like that. She said:

"Do you reef in your gassles when you are cold or do you let go in the mittens and crabapples?"

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### MY NAME IS FRANK

The following review of Frank Laskier's short book, "My Nams Is Frank", was written by Homer Lee Laycock, Engineering freshman from East Liverpool. The review was written as part of the regular routine assignment in English 413, Autumn Quarter.

"My Name Is Frank", by Frank Laskier is a series of sincere, simply-stated broadcasts, conversation such as seamen would pass their off-hours with. I heard the greater part of these broadcasts; and not once, I believe, did I listen to a whole program. On the radio they seemed to have no sincerity or reality. And yet, written up in book form, they held my interest to the end; I did not close the book until I had finished, and had read several passages over again. Perhaps the difference was that in reading them I realized the real set-up: here was a sailor, telling his actual experiences, feelings, and emotions. On this factor, I think, rests any power or "grip" which the book may have.

Frank, at the beginning, describes a sailor's feeling toward his job. He gives a beautiful account of the peace, joy, and contentment which the men feel, and of the various little, insignificant things which make them again and again leave home to join their ship. All through the book, one is conscious of what Frank terms his "mental laziness." He tells of the banana ships; of the peaceful, sleepy islands where they are loaded; and of the shiftless and idle natives who raise them. His home town, which would probably disgust a person were he to drive through it, is so glorified as to make a person stop and question the value of money, position, and the eternal strife for self betterment.

There are several broadcasts which I feel were included for their effect on the morale of the English people. Frank tells of dive-bomber attacks, of the unbelievable cruelty of the Germans, of the courage and bravery of his fellow seamen. Reading them, it is easy to understand why these men nurse such a deep hatred for their country's enemies, and to see wherein they develop a greater lust for revenge.

After closing this book, I thought a long while, wondering just why I liked it. Many people, I imagine, would not appreciate it at all. But I have a natural liking for the sea; and this book shows, as many do not, the joyous, human side of a sailor's life. It depicts them as a race apart, a separate group by itself. But it also brings out the determination, the will to fight, and the overpowering desire for vengeance which must be present in a wartime sailor's mind. With the thousands of Franks who are sailing our seas today, I have no doubt but that a rightful revenge will be taken and a deserved lesson taught.

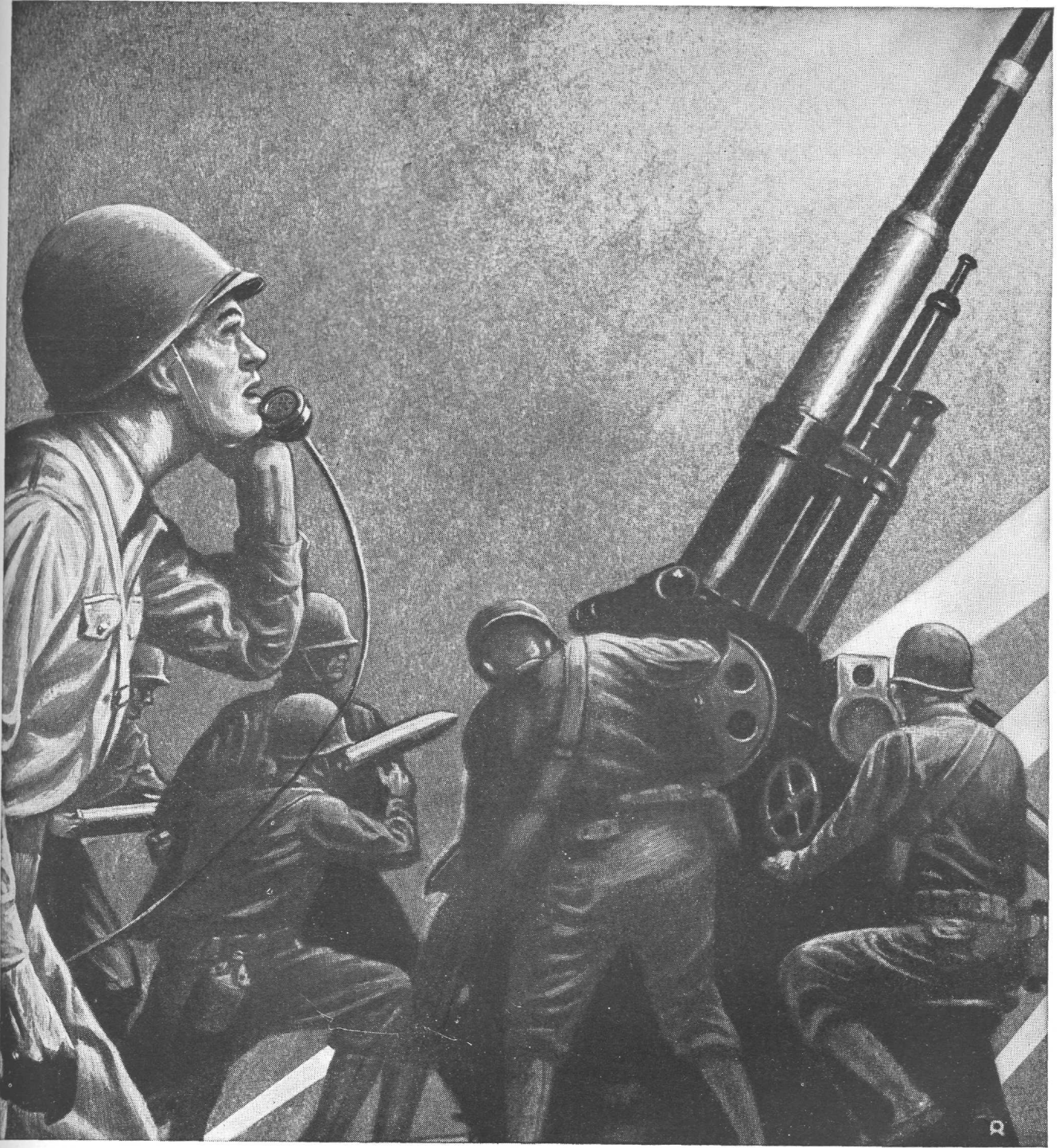
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### RESIN TO REPLACE METALS

A new war metal replacement is the Visual resin which is taken from the Southern pine tree. The resin is manufactured with fibers such as rage, sulphite, and sulphate resulting in a sturdy, hard, dense, stiff, light weight, petroleum resistant, plastic composition.

A possible replacement of food and petroleum product containers, fluorescent lighting fixtures, etc., this plastic like other resin treated laminated paper products may be produced by paper-making machinery. The laminated sheets require curing by means of hydraulic steam presses and rapid cooling, the time for curing being from four to six minutes. With the exception of unusual molded shapes requiring special compressions and dies, this plastic with no priorities will encounter few if any bottle necks of production.

*Every branch of the Armed Services uses the telephone. No. 1 of a series, Anti-Aircraft.*



To his mother and dad it seems only yesterday that he was using the family telephone to call his high school sweetheart. But today the orders he sends and receives over his wartime telephone help speed the day when love and laughter, peace and progress shall again rule the world.



**Western Electric**

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IN WAR...ARSENAL OF COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

